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Thurston · Discourse on the Election of a Marble Tablet in Memory of Rev. David Thurston 1871

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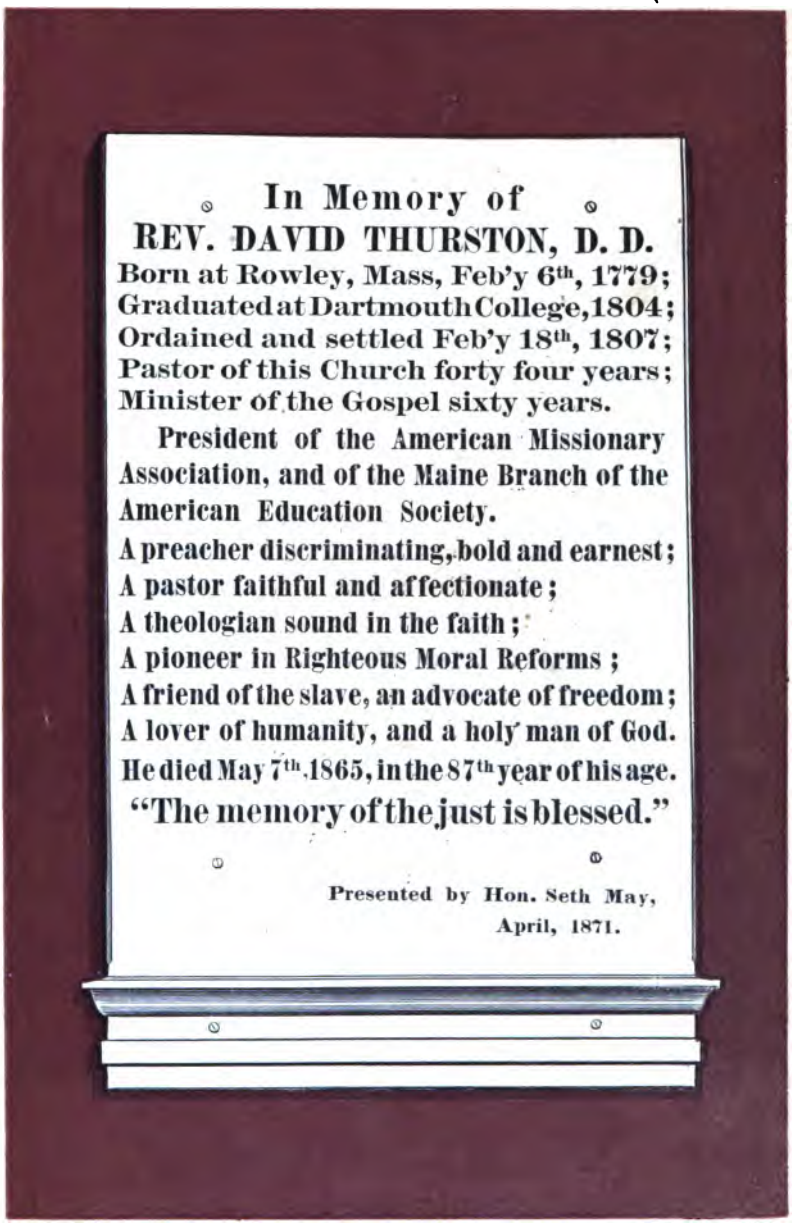

The above tablet is of marble, six feet two inches high by three feet six inches wide, resting upon a marble cornice some nine inches deep, and secured to the wall in the rear of the pulpit, in the Congregational Church at Winthrop, Me.

A

DISCOURSE

ON THE

ERECTION OF A MARBLE TABLET

IN THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WINTHROP,

APRIL 2, 1871.

IN MEMORY OF

REV. DAVID THURSTON,

FORMER PASTOR OF THE CHURCH.

BY REV. STEPHEN THURSTON,

OF SEARSPORT.

PORTLAND:

PRINTED BY B. THURSTON & CO.

1871.

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March 10, 1938

WINTHROP, April 3, 1871.

Rev. STEPHEN THURSTON:

Dear Sir,—The undersigned, being desirous that your Memorial Sermon of yesterday, relating to your beloved brother, and our former faithful pastor, should be published, respectfully request that you will furnish a copy of it to be published for distribution. And we have no hesitancy in saying that we regard all you have said concerning the life and character of your dear brother as strictly just and true.

STEPHEN SEWALL,	C. A. WING,
JOSHUA WING,	A. P. SNOW,
PELEG BENSON,	B. H. CUSHMAN,
SAMUEL WOOD,	EDWARD P. BAKER.
HENRY WOODWARD,	

SEARSPORT, April 22, 1871.

To Dea. STEPHEN SEWALL, and others:

Gentlemen,—I cheerfully comply with your most unexpected request.

S. THURSTON.

SERMON.

ACTS II. 24.

HE WAS A GOOD MAN, AND FULL OF THE HOLY GHOST, AND OF FAITH.

THE eulogistic notice the Bible takes of good men is a sufficient warrant for holding up to view the virtues of departed friends, who have been distinguished for their excellences. Job is there represented as a perfect and upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil. David is said to have been a man after God's own heart. Daniel, amidst the corruptions of an oriental court, is represented, even by his enemies, as so blameless, that they could find no fault in him,—no occasion against him,—except his strict adherence to the law of his God. How often does the great apostle speak words of commendation and praise to the Christian brethren whom he addressed? Of Barnabas it is said in the text, He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith.

Let us expand a little this description of the char-

acter of this early disciple, and thus the better appreciate its fullness.

The first thing said of him is that he was a good man. This phrase may be so expanded as to include all the excellences found in the best of men,—all intellectual greatness,—all social culture and refinement,—all moral purity and elevation. These combined in fitting proportions make only the good man. Still, one is esteemed as good, who has not acquired this perfection of goodness. Very possibly the inspired historian may have had reference to some of the natural traits of the character of Barnabas,—as that he was a man of amiable instincts, of a generous disposition and kind heart, of inflexible integrity, and noble public-spiritedness. Some men, who do not claim to be truly pious, have this natural goodness so fully developed as to mantle the cheeks of many whose names are on the catalogue of the Church. None exhibit greater kindness of heart, a quicker sympathy for the suffering, or a more ready hand for their relief. In the social relations none are more bland in feeling, or complaisant in manner. In the business of life they are patterns of integrity and promptness. They are reliable men, worthy of implicit confidence. They have also a quick discernment

for the public welfare, and are among the foremost in efforts for its advancement. Such are called good men,—they are benefactors to the world.

Such an one Barnabas might have been. But in addition to his natural goodness, however exalted, he coupled with it a devoted piety. His love to Christ and the souls of men constrained him to give his life to the work of propagating the gospel, and extending the salvation it reveals. He sought not merely the conversion of sinners, but their continued advancement in holiness. When tidings came to Jerusalem of the wonderful work of grace in Antioch, in which great multitudes turned from dumb idols to the worship of the living God, Barnabas was regarded by the church at Jerusalem as the fitting man to be sent unto them to instruct and strengthen these new converts to the Christian faith. When he had come and seen the grace of God he was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. It was in view of his Christian labors, especially, that the historian gave him this high commendation,—For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith; eminently fitted for such an important mission, and much people were added unto the Lord. His works exhib-

ited his goodness, and God crowned his labors with success.

The second thing said of Barnabas is that he was full of the Holy Ghost.

The New Testament often speaks of the Holy Spirit as dwelling in the people of God. He dwelleth with you, said Christ to his disciples, and shall be in you. The dwelling of the Spirit in the people of God is a most marked and important feature in their character. He dwells there not by a physical, substantive indwelling. There is no personal union. But he dwells there by his sacred, transforming influences, producing those holy affections called the fruits of the Spirit. He so works as to give rise to all the Christian graces,—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, and such like.

When, therefore, it is said Barnabas was full of the Holy Ghost, we are assured that he abounded in the fruits of the Spirit; that the Christian graces, bright, vigorous, active, shone forth in his life and character. They were the results of the indwelling Spirit.

The great moral change which fits men for the kingdom of heaven is wrought by the Spirit of God. He so moves on the soul as to produce awakening, a

sense of sin and guilt and unworthiness and need of pardon. The eye is directed to Christ as the only hope of the lost; and under the guiding and efficient influence of the Spirit, Christ is received with a penitent heart, and a loving confidence. The work of regeneration is now effected, and the aspirations of the soul are directed heavenward. But the Spirit leaves not the soul here. He moves upon it through the medium of divine truth, so as to nourish and strengthen the Christian graces. Somewhat in proportion as the believer cherishes the motions of the Spirit, prays for his continual indwelling, renders a prompt and cheerful compliance with the convictions of duty produced by his agency, will he abound in the fruits of the Spirit. To be full of the Holy Ghost implies his constant indwelling; continually so influencing the soul as to expand the Christian graces, energize virtuous principle, and instamp on it the image of Christ. Such an one was Barnabas.

The third thing said of him was that he was full of faith.

Faith is one of the fruits of the Spirit. It is here specified, while no other grace is, probably because it is a leading and most influential grace. True faith

is the cordial reception of God's word, and submission to its appropriate influence. It is eminently active. It works—works by love. Love is the inspiring principle, the moving element, while faith seems the executive power. It infuses into the soul confidence, boldness, and strength,—bears it onward through scenes of conflict and peril. Behold what it enabled ancient worthies to accomplish, as recorded in the Epistle to the Hebrews; how it wrought in the great apostle, when his friends, foreseeing the perils awaiting him, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem, and he nobly replied, what mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus.

The faith of Barnabas led him early to unite himself to the rising kingdom of the Man of Galilee. He sold his property and laid the money at the apostles' feet. He consecrated his all to the work of extending the infant church, the kingdom of holiness and peace. Laboring for a season in Palestine and Syria to establish the converts in the faith of their divine Lord, he subsequently went forth with Paul to preach the gospel among the Gentiles. In this work he encountered perils and persecutions, his

faith sustaining him and bearing him onward in the thickest of the fight. His works demonstrated a vigorous faith. He believed, and therefore spoke, and toiled, and suffered for the honor of his divine Master, and the salvation of the perishing. The indwelling of the Spirit, and his vigorous faith, fitted him eminently for the important part he acted in planting the standard of the cross on pagan ground.

If we consider the condition of the Church at this time, we shall perceive that nothing but a vigorous faith could have induced one to undertake its extension and triumph in the earth. Its Head and Master had just been put to death as a malefactor. It is true he refused to be holden of death, and his friends claimed that he had gone into heaven as a Prince and Saviour, to grant repentance and pardon. But the world discarded this account, and regarded the preaching of the cross as a wild delusion. It was to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the Greeks foolishness. The wisdom of the world, and the hate of the world, and the powers of the world, were all arrayed against it in bitter opposition. To crush this rising kingdom they planned and plotted and persecuted. To believe, nevertheless, that this kingdom was to prevail and become the controlling power among the

nations, required a faith of which I fear we have but faint conceptions. Yet such a faith Barnabas had. Hence he acted as a pioneer in the arduous work of bringing the heathen world to receive Jesus as the Saviour of the lost, and submit to him as their rightful Sovereign. As long as the Church lives on the face of the earth, the name of Barnabas will hold a conspicuous place on the scroll of Christian heroes.

But other Christian heroes have since arisen to carry forward the work so auspiciously begun by the first preachers of the gospel, and of whom it may be said, they were good men and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith. May not this language be applied to the beloved man, who so long ministered to this church and people in this holy place? Was he not a good man? Was he not filled with the Holy Ghost as few have been? And had he not a vigorous faith?

I suppose it is expected of me,—although I hardly know what is expected,—that I should say something of his life and character. I feel deeply the extreme delicacy of the task. The fraternal relation I sustained to him may so have biased my judgment that large deduction from the estimate I make of him may be needed. Then I am to speak to some who

long knew him as their spiritual teacher and guide, and may therefore be better able than myself to form a just estimate of the man.

Still I will endeavor to rise above the embarrassment of the situation, and forget, so far as I can, the fact of brotherhood, and speak of him according to the place he holds in my estimation, as I would of any other man. It is meet that I should say, so great was the disparity in our ages, that, notwithstanding we were reared in the same family circle, and fed at the same board, I have no recollection of his early life. He left home for college further back than my memory reaches. My earliest recollections of him present him to my view as a young preacher of the gospel, just having completed his academic and theological studies. After that, I saw him but a few times, till he had been settled in this place considerably more than half a score of years. Then I spent almost two years in his family, and sat under his ministry. After that, my acquaintance with him was somewhat particular; and in mature life it became most familiar and confidential, till I came to know him well.

In speaking of him I notice, first,

HIS SOCIAL NATURE.

The Creator dealt most kindly with him in endowing him with an assemblage of social affections, which eminently fitted him both to enjoy and to impart an unusual amount of happiness in the various relations of life. Few appreciated more highly, or enjoyed more keenly, the blessings of the conjugal and parental relations. His house was therefore the home of quietness and serene comfort. He had great pleasure in the society of his friends. He greeted them with warm cordiality, and entertained them with sincere, though unpretentious hospitality. His smile was a benediction, full of benignity, so that you at once felt at ease in his presence, and assured you would find in him a friend. Though a lover of books, and of the study, he found pleasure and profit in mingling with his fellow sojourners in this house of his pilgrimage. In the company, especially, of his ministerial brethren and christian friends, his cup seemed to overflow. In such communion with the good, he had foretastes of the purer fellowship of the spirits of just men made perfect. I cannot doubt that he looks back from his celestial home upon the

scenes of his earthly communings with the people of God, and sees that in them he had prelibations of the more exalted communion of the saints in glory.

HIS INTELLECTUAL CHARACTER.

As a man of intellectual capacity, Mr. Thurston stood among the ablest men in the ministry of Maine. As a scholar he took high rank in college. As a theologian he acquired so much reputation, that several young men, even after theological seminaries were established, chose to receive his private instruction in the study of divinity. He received an appointment to the chair of theology in Bangor Seminary, which he thought best to decline. These facts show the estimation in which he was held as a man of intellectual ability, as well as of sound theology. His mind was solid, rather than brilliant,—more givento logic than rhetoric; to philosophy than poetry. He was a clear thinker and an able reasoner. Having established his premises, he carried them out unflinchingly to their logical results.

It is not claimed that his mind was of the first order. Truly great men are of rare production. In the state the North has produced but one Webster; the South but one Calhoun; the West but one Clay.

In the American Church but one Jonathan Edwards has arisen, and one Lyman Beecher. In the sidereal heavens there is but one sun to a retinue of planets. So many men of fine capacities come upon the stage, to one who is truly great. Our honored friend comes into this class. His intellectual powers were of a highly respectable order,—above the vast majority of professional men,—and such as enabled him to exert a wide influence for good. Said one acute observer, on listening to one of his public performances, "How well a production appears when a *man* stands behind it."

PREACHER.

As a preacher he could not be ranked among the popular, fascinating class. He was not what in modern parlance is termed a sensational preacher. He did not aim to be, had little respect for such. Neither his intellectual type nor his moral tastes were adapted to this style of preaching. It may well be doubted whether such ministrations win men to the ranks of the Captain of salvation; for

> "'Tis pitiful
> To court a grin, when you should win a soul,—
> To break a jest, when pity should inspire
> Pathetic exhortation; and to address
> The skittish fancy with facetious tales,
> When sent with God's commission to the heart."

The man who formerly stood in this sacred place as God's messenger had other and far different conceptions of the dignity and reponsibility of his sacred office. In fulfilling its duties he aimed to be an instructive preacher,—to declare, and, as far as he was able, unfold the counsel of God. He regarded the doctrines of the gospel as constituting its vital force, shedding light on its precepts, opening to view the path of life, unfolding the wondrous method of grace and salvation, displaying the wisdom and matchless love of God in redemption, teaching men what they must do, and what they must be, in order to gain eternal life, enforcing duty by the sublime fact of eternal retribution both for saints and sinners.

Of course he had no sympathy with the sentiment so rife at this day, that the preaching of the doctrines of our holy religion is unwise and unuseful, and hence they must be kept out of sight. Truth was dear to his heart, and he endeavored so to unfold it that his people should be rooted and grounded in it. Is not the stable character of this church and people in their steadfast adherence to the great principles of divine truth he so faithfully taught an illustration and proof of his wisdom in this matter? Woe worth the day

when the distinctive doctrines of the gospel shall be generally excluded from our pulpits.

But he preached the doctrines, not as mere bald facts, dry, abstract theories, having no relation to man's duty and destiny. He preached them as illustrating and enforcing the precepts of the gospel. He was eminently a practical preacher, no man dwelling more explicitly and emphatically upon the duties of life in all its varied relations,—duties to God, duties to man, duties to one's own soul. He aimed to lift his people to a high plane of moral character and conduct, and to prepare them to be presented faultless before the throne of God with exceeding joy.

PULPIT MANNERS.

His manners in the pulpit were characterized by simplicity, solemnity, earnestness, and an affectionate persuasiveness. He was utterly unpretentious. He stood erect in the calm simplicity of one charged with a message from God to immortal men, soon to enter upon their eternal retribution. Impressed, himself, with the magnitude and solemnity of his message, his manner was serious and solemn. I should be surprised to know that he ever perpetrated a mere witticism in the pulpit, or uttered a sentence designed

to provoke a smile. He was grave and impressive. He was also an earnest preacher,—not vociferous, not clamorous. Deep feeling is not noisy. His was the earnestness of one deeply impressed with the magnitude of those interests to be affected by the preaching of the gospel, and solicitous of accomplishing some saving good. He was affectionate and persuasive. His style of address to the church has often reminded me of the style of the loving disciple,—like John he called them "Beloved." He could, when occasion called, be bold and startling, and sound an alarm in God's holy mountain. To those at ease in Zion, and those dead in trespasses and sins, his voice would sometimes assume its trumpet tones, that, if possible, he might wake them to life and activity. But generally his manner was mild, calm, and persuasive.

I have heard no higher commendation of his appearance in the pulpit, than what is implied in a remark made to me, I think more than forty years ago, by a brother minister recently entered into rest. Said he, "The first time I heard your brother preach, he made on me this impression, that he would be glad to do me good." Have not many others had made on them the same impression?

I know not that a better description of him as a preacher can be given than what is found in the familiar language of the poet. It may have been applied to him before; but I will quote it, as seeming to me most pertinent.

"There stands the messenger of truth; there stands
The legate of the skies; his theme divine,
His office sacred, his credentials clear.
By him the violated law speaks out
Its thunders; and by him, in strains as sweet
As angels use, the gospel whispers peace.
Simple, grave, sincere;
In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
And plain in manner, decent, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture; much impressed
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock be fed,
May feel it too; affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty men.

PASTOR.

Of him as pastor I will utter but a word. If he was not kind, faithful, and sympathetic, he did not act in keeping with his general character. That he was abundant in labors I well remember. He not only visited the people from house to house, but he did much of what many of the younger ministers of

this day do little or nothing,—he preached lectures on week-days and evenings in the various parts of his parish. He did this the last winter of his life, when fourscore and six years old. After having preached twice on the Sabbath, heard a class in the sabbath-school, and conducted a prayer-meeting in the evening,—a greater amount of labor than most young men are willing to perform,—he went forth on other evenings to lecture in outlying neighborhoods, saying, in a letter to me, "If the people will not come out to hear the gospel, the gospel must be carried to them." During my residence in his family he was blessed with a precious revival of religion. A weekly inquiry meeting was held in his own house; and well do I recollect the abundant pains he took to instruct the anxious inquirer respecting the nature of true conversion,—the marks of distinction between the genuine and the spurious,—the evidence on which one may safely rest the hope of pardon and eternal life. Like a faithful shepherd he earnestly labored to gather the lambs of the flock into the fold of the chief Shepherd. But those of you who have seen him in the chambers of the sick, and by the bedside of the dying, and at the funeral of your loved ones,

know better what he was as a pastor, than I can claim to know.

But it was in his

RELIGIOUS CHARACTER

that your former pastor stood out with the most distinctive prominence. A distinguished writer of the last generation, says there are three kinds of greatness,—physical, intellectual, and moral. The moral he regarded as the highest kind of greatness,—greater than that of the hero, who plans and executes great battles, which decide the fate of nations,—greater than that of the mere philosopher, who elucidates the science of mind, or unfolds the arcana of nature. Here, if anywhere, the beloved man, who passes in review before us to day, might have been called great —great in goodness.

It is but a meagre analysis which can here be given of his religious character. Among its leading elements I should reckon reverence, conscientiousness, devoutness, and firmness of moral principle.

His reverence for God was marked. It was developed in all his intercourse with his Maker, in all his treatment of divine truth, and religious ordinances. How profoundly reverent were his approaches to the

throne of grace, as indicated by his countenance, the tones of his voice, and the well-ordered address?

In strict conscientiousness who ever excelled him? He would sooner have suffered the loss of all human favor than of the approbation of his own conscience. It bound him to the law of right in all the relations of life, and he would have encountered the trials and sufferings of persecution, rather than disregard its mandates. If it sometimes pointed to paths where his friends would not follow, he would enter, even if he walked solitary and alone. They might meet him with averted face, and withhold from him the accustomed tokens of respect and affection; but he still adhered unswervingly to the supreme law of his mind. He was a conscientious man.

Few men were more unselfish. For the sake of preaching the gospel and laboring in the vineyard of his Lord, he was willing to practice the most rigid economy, and live on very humble fare. He might with great propriety have said to his people what Paul said to the Corinthians,—I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. He showed more solicitude for the welfare of others than for his own. Although through a long life of useful toil he

received but a meagre compensation for his services, and never possessed but narrow means, yet he was liberal in his charities. For many years he adopted the tithing system, and gave in charity one-tenth of his income. He had much pleasure in pursuing this system,—never, after adopting it, was destitute of money either for his own use or for charitable purposes.

Religious devoutness was one of his most marked characteristics. He must have communed much with the Father of Spirits,—with things unseen and eternal, in order to have acquired such reverent facility and holy fervor in the duty of prayer. He often seemed near the throne, as if in the presence chamber of the Most High. How fervently did he there plead for the Church of God, its purity and enlargement,—plead for souls in the way to death, that they might be won to Christ and saved,—plead for the poor and suffering; for the victims and bondmen of appetite and passion,—for the oppressed and downtrodden,—with what unutterable longings did he pray for the coming of Christ's kingdom, and the reign of righteousness. In no other way, probably, did he ever make so deep an impression on the minds

of men as by the prayers he was called upon to offer on some public occasions. I will mention two.

In 1831, when in the fulness of his strength, he met the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, as delegate from the Maine Conference. It was a time of division and excitement in that church, regarding what was called new and old divinity; each party,—very conscientiously, no doubt,—striving for the ascendency. In this meeting party spirit ran high, and discussions arose which gathered warmth, and called forth feelings and language such as we do not expect to find in the general assembly and church of the first born in Heaven. The session was stormy and tumultuous, and in the midst of one of their most excited passages the moderator arrested the regular business, and called upon the delegate from Maine to pray. He did pray, in melting strains, and with fervent desire, that God would calm those perturbed spirits,—that those christian men and ministers might not, by unhallowed strife, give occasion to the wicked exultingly to exclaim: "a-ha, a-ha, so would we have it." The assembly was melted,—the excitement was allayed. It was as if the Master had said, "peace, be still,—and there was a great calm." The public prints spoke

much of that prayer, and its effects; and the Maine delegate was long remembered with peculiar interest.

The other occasion was less memorable. It was the ordination of his nephew in Newbury,—the Rev. John R. Thurston. Prof. Shepard, of blessed memory, preached one of his striking and impressive sermons. The uncle offered the ordaining prayer; and the prayer has been more frequently alluded to than the sermon. For fulness, pathos, and power, it has been rarely equaled.

An intelligent hearer of that prayer gives his impression of it, after twelve years, as follows: "The impression that lingers with me till now is, that the prayer was exceedingly appropriate, solemn, pathetic, comprehensive and minute, touching every department of labor and duty devolving upon a good minister; quoting some very beautiful and appropriate passages of scripture. It seemed for the time that the heavens and earth were brought very near together, and a finite saint was in very deed communing with the infinite and holy God, and that he had brought all the audience up, or the infinite down, to the blessed communion. I don't think the impression will ever be obliterated from my mind and heart."

is the only other trait I shall mention as contributing to the fulness of Christian character. The question of right,—of duty,—having been settled, he adhered to it with oaken firmness. I know not what temptation,—what pressure of circumstances would have induced him to commit an act of admitted wickedness. His firm adherence to the law of righteousness in all the changing scenes of life,—his constant pursuit of the path of duty, whatever might oppose,—indicated the strength of his principles, as well as the calm energy of his will.

This was an important element in his character as a reformer. His quick moral discernment carried him in advance of his times in regard to the evils to be reformed. None was more ready than he to employ whatever of talent or influence he had in removing the evils under which humanity groans, being burdened. Early did he become a laborer in the cause of temperance, and of the oppressed. What sacrifices did he make, what trials endure, especially in the cause of the enslaved! He remembered those in bonds, as bound with them. If he did not with them literally clank his chains, and suffer the driver's lash, he endured what was quite as grievous to his sen-

sitive soul. He lost for a season, and in a measure, the loving confidence and esteem of christian brethren —of the beloved ministers of Him who came to proclaim liberty to the captives,—men with whom he had long been in close and fraternal fellowship. O, it was iron to his soul! In some parts of the State, pacific as was his nature, he was literally hooted and mobbed, because he opened his mouth for the dumb. But what was still more grievous, it cost him his home, his beloved church and people, for whose welfare he had toiled and prayed more than forty years. But I will not here dwell. I come not here to open wounds afresh. I allude to these painful things just to bring out to view another trait of his christian character,—that of his forgiving disposition. Notwithstanding all he suffered in the cause of the oppressed, whether by his brethren in the ministry, or the church, or the baser sort, I cannot call to mind a hard or unforgiving word he ever uttered respecting them. His forgiving love,—his broad charity,—covered a multitude of wrongs done him.

I shall not soon forget the remark one of his friends made to me as we were following his remains to their last resting-place. "The difficulty with your brother," said he, "was that he was a half century in

advance of his times." It was true, and for this, like other reformers, who must be in advance of their times, he suffered. No unusual thing happened to him. First opposed, ridiculed, persecuted perhaps,—then, in process of time, respected, honored, almost idolized it may be,—this has extensively been the lot of reformers. With the light of 1871 reflected on the past, we can the better judge of the character,—of the actions of men twenty to forty years ago. Happy will it be for any of us if that reflected light shall show the wisdom and uprightness of our past life.

When the long agitated question was settled, that he must leave the place and people whom most of all on earth he loved, he did not sit down in inglorious ease, gloomy, sad and misanthropic, complaining of the ingratitude of the world; far otherwise. Although in the seventy-third year of his age, he girded himself for further efforts to bless a suffering race. He sought some humbler field of labor, and spent between thirteen and fourteen years of his latter days in preaching to feeble churches. Both his benevolence and his humility were thus strikingly manifested in these days of his whitened locks. In this humbler sphere of labor, he was the same bland, cheerful, happy man as when holding a position of greater

conspicuousness. For him to live was Christ. To labor for his divine Lord was the joy of his heart. A missionary from China, on visiting his native land, and learning how this aged servant occupied the latter years of his life, remarked that "he knew no brighter manifestation of the humility of the man, than his thus descending from a higher to a lower station, and there cheerfully laboring till called to go up higher."

He did so labor and occupy till his Lord came. He preached till within seventeen days of his death;—died with his harness on,—died among a people who loved and honored him, and showed him kindness even up to the grave's mouth. In the solitude of yonder sequestered lonely cemetery, where in early life he buried his first love,* sleep his mortal remains. There let them sleep till the archangel's voice shall wake them to an immortal life.

"Servant of God, well done!
"Rest from thy loved employ:
"The battle fought, the victory won,
"Enter thy Master's joy.
"The pains of death are past;
"Labor and sorrow cease;
"And life's long warfare closed at last,
"His soul is found in peace!"

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*His first wife, with whom he lived but a few months, was buried there, 1809. His second wife still survives, at the age of 85 years. Since the delivery of this sermon, his second wife, sister of the late President Brown, of Dartmouth College, has died, and now sleeps by his side.

Is it not a fitting service,—an appropriate tribute of respect,—which a life-long friend has performed in the erection of this beautiful tablet to the memory of such a man? Is it not meet that his name should be arrayed before the people for whose welfare his life-work was mainly performed? and that in a few brief pertinent sentences, they should from Sabbath to Sabbath be reminded of his character and services? Thus he being dead will continue to speak.

For this labor of love and respect for the departed, in the name of the family of the beloved man,—in the name of his fraternal relations,—may I not add, in the name of all the good who knew and loved him,—I return most sincere and hearty thanks. May God bless the friend who has done this noble deed, and in due time permit him to join in the better country the man he here loved and honored as his friend and pastor. There may they, with a fullness of joy unknown to earth, unitedly bow before Him whom all the angels of God worship.

A word in relation to myself and this congregation, and I am done. A little more than half a century since I came to this town, an uncultured youth, to pursue study with my honored brother, and spent

nearly two years among this people. I was a constant attendant upon the public worship of God with this congregation. Yes, this congregation; for while men die, institutions live,—churches live,—congregations live,—although there may be an entire change in the individuals composing them. This church and society are the same as half a century since,—are still the Congregational Church and Society of Winthrop. But O, what a change in the individuals of whom they are composed! How many are present who worshipped here fifty years ago? I can hear of only about twenty now belonging to the society, who worshipped here at that time; I then knew nearly all who were regular church-goers. Now, I can scarcely recognise a half dozen I then knew. One face which I saw among the singers almost fifty-two years since, I see there still.* Blessed privilege to sing God's praise more than half a century in his earthly temple,—to be followed, I trust, in this case, with the ceaseless songs of heaven! But the few I recognise are like myself, in the sere autumn of life. O, how brief our life,—how swift our days! We pass like the shadows of the morning!

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* Capt. Peleg Benson.

Shall we not listen to the voice of these fleeting days and hours as they pass, saying, "Haste, mortals, haste in the great work of life; your days will soon be numbered,—your probation closed,—your doom sealed; haste then, and prepare to meet your God."

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